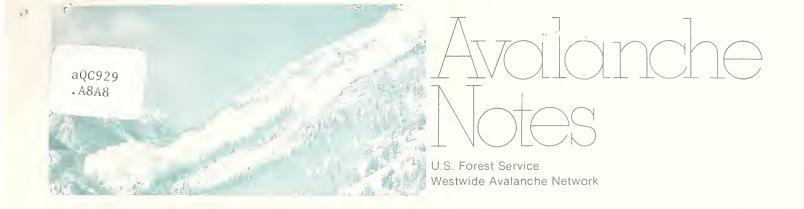
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## APRIL, 1978

Snowfall in April was generally adequate around the West, the exception again being the Pacific Northwest which has yet in 1978 to see normal snowfall. For April some snowfall percentages of normal are as follows: Berthoud Pass, 89%; Alta, 140%; Alpine Meadows, 220%; Mammoth Mt., 230%; and Stevens Pass, 58%. Looking at the season's snowfall totals, we can assess the winter at a few selected sites. For November-April, Berthoud Pass recorded an even 400 inches of snow (133% of normal), the 3rd snowiest winter since records began in 1926; Alta, 524.5 inches (110%); Alpine Meadows, 382.5 inches (124%); and Stevens Pass, 394 inches (79%). For December-April, Mammoth Mt. recorded 460.5 inches (159%), second only to the winter of 68-69. For December-March, Aspen recorded 240.5 inches (158%); Vail, 431 inches (180%); Taos, 178.5 inches (108%); Jackson Hole, 370 inches (115%); and Crystal Mt., 144 and 167 inches at the lower and upper study plots, respectively (46%). For Aspen and Vail, this was the snowiest winter in at least 11 years, and for Crystal Mt., it was the second driest on record.

The April avalanche totals show 660 slides at Alpine Meadows. This is the second month of the winter with more than 600 slides at this area, the most active site on the Westwide Avalanche Network.

Two serious avalanche accidents occurred in April, the first leading to the 13th fatality of the season. On the 16th on Mt. Sopris, Colorado, a snowmobiler, riding alone at the time, apparently collapsed a cornice, and both man and machine dropped 300 feet down a steep avalanche chute. This triggered a small avalanche which buried the victim and most of his snowmobile. Two days later searchers located the body beneath 1 foot of ice-hard snow. This is the fifth recorded snowmobile-avalanche fatality. A curious footnote to this accident is that 4 days earlier another snowmobiler on the same mountain soared off a cornice under full power and plunged 1800 feet to his death. No avalanche occurred in this accident.

The second mishap occurred on the 23rd at Panorama Point in Mt. Rainier National Park, the scene of several avalanche incidents in the past. Nine persons—variously on foot, skis, and snowshoes—were at different stages of switchbacking up the slope when it fractured above all of them. Seven were caught, four of whom were partly buried and two completely buried. All victims were located within 15 minutes, and luckily no injuries occurred.

The season's avalanche statistics thru April are tabulated below:

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ALPINE SNOW AND AVALANCHE RESEARCH PROJECT RM STATION FORT COLLINS, COLO.

APRIL 1978

## SUMMARY OF WEATHER AND SNOW CONDITIONS

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U.S. FOREST SERVICE
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APRIL 1978 AVALANCHE SUMMARY

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APKIL 1978 AVALANCHE SUMMARY

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